United Nations CRC/C/HTI/CO/2-3

Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Haiti*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined second and third periodic reports of Haiti (CRC/C/HTI/2-3) at its 2068th and 2070th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.2068 and 2070), held on 15 January 2016, and adopted the following concluding observations at its 2104th meeting (see CRC/C/SR.2104), held on 29 January 2016.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined second and third periodic reports of the State party and the written replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/HTI/Q/2-3/Add.1), which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee expresses appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the high-level delegation of the State party.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

3. The Committee welcomes the ratification of or accession to the following instruments:

(a) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in 2014;

(b) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in 2013;

(c) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, in 2009;

(d) Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption, in 2012;

(e) Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, in 2009;

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-first session (11-29 January 2016).

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(f) International Labour Organization Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138), in 2007;

(g) International Labour Organization Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182), in 2007.

4. The Committee notes with appreciation the adoption of the following legislative measures:

(a) Law on the sale and trafficking of persons, in 2014;

(b) Law on the prevention and suppression of corruption, in 2014;

(c) The new adoption act of 29 August 2013;

(d) Act on paternity, maternity and filiation, of 12 April 2012;

(e) Act of 9 May 2012 on the organization and functioning of the Civil Protection Office;

(f) Act of 13 March 2012 on the integration of persons with disabilities;

(g) Decree of 6 July 2005 amending the rules on sexual assault and eliminating discrimination against women in that regard;

(h) Act of 7 May 2003 on the prohibition and elimination of all forms of abuse, violence, ill-treatment or inhumane treatment against children.

5. The Committee welcomes the establishment or adoption of the following institutional and policy measures:

(a) National action plan to prevent and respond to violence against children, in 2014;

(b) Anti-trafficking national plan of action, in 2014;

(c) National Counter-Trafficking Committee, in 2015;

(d) National Tripartite Committee against child labour, in 2013;

(e) Interministerial Human Rights Committee, in 2013;

(f) Working Committee on the integration of children in street situations in school, in 2012;

(g) Adoption by the Social Welfare and Research Institute (IBESR) of a plan to decentralize its services in nine departments, in 2012;

(h) Administrative measure regulating travel by minors and a memorandum of understanding signed between the Social Welfare and Research Institute, the Brigade for the Protection of Minors and the Directorate of Immigration and Emigration, in 2012;

(i) Strategic plan for the development of Haiti;

(j) Programme for free compulsory universal education, in 2012;

(k) National plan for the protection of Haitian children in difficult or vulnerable situations, in 2007.

III. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

6. The Committee notes the continuing effects of the 2010 earthquake and the political instability in the State party, which impede the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Convention.

IV. Main areas of concern and recommendations

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

The Committee's previous recommendations

7. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all measures necessary to address its previous recommendations of 2003 (CRC/C/15/Add.202) which have not been implemented or not sufficiently implemented and, in particular, those related to data collection (para. 16); dissemination and training (para. 20); best interests of the child (para. 29); and respect for the views of the child (para. 31).**

Legislation

8. The Committee notes with concern that the Child Protection Code and the Framework Law reforming IBESR have not yet been adopted.

9. **The Committee recommends that the State party expedite the adoption of the Child Protection Code and of the Framework Law reforming IBESR without any further delay.**

Coordination

10. The Committee is concerned that there is no single government entity responsible for the overall coordination of the policies, laws and programmes relating to children's rights.

11. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish an appropriate body at a high interministerial level with a clear mandate and sufficient authority to coordinate all activities related to the implementation of the Convention at the cross-sectoral, national, regional and local levels. The State party should ensure that said coordinating body is provided with the necessary human, technical and financial resources for its effective operation.**

Allocation of resources

12. The Committee notes with appreciation that resources allocated for the implementation of children's rights have increased. It is concerned, however, that these resources remain largely insufficient, and that the national debt has further increased which may have a limiting effect on allocation of resources to children. Furthermore, while welcoming the adoption in 2014 of the law on the prevention and suppression of corruption, the Committee is deeply concerned about the high prevalence of corruption.

13. **In the light of its day of general discussion in 2007 on the theme "Resources for the rights of the child: responsibility of States", the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the budget needs of children and allocate adequate budgetary resources for the implementation of children's rights**

and make sure that those budgetary lines are protected even in situations of economic crisis, natural disasters or other emergencies;

(b) **Take immediate measures to combat corruption and strengthen institutional capacities to effectively detect, investigate and prosecute all allegations of corruption and mismanagement of funds and bring those responsible to justice.**

Data collection

14. **The Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.202, para. 16) and recommends that the State party develop a system of data collection and indicators consistent with the Convention and disaggregated by sex, age, and urban and rural area. This system should cover all children up to the age of 18 years, with specific emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable. It further encourages the State party to use these indicators and data in the formulation of policies and programmes for the effective implementation of the Convention. It also recommends that the State party take into account the conceptual and methodological framework set out in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) publication *Human Rights Indicators: a Guide to Measurement and Implementation* when defining, collecting and disseminating statistical information and seek technical assistance from, inter alia, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme.**

Independent monitoring

15. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Office of the Protection of the Citizen in 2012 and the establishment of a Child Protection Unit within the Office. It is concerned, however, that the Office is insufficiently funded, that the Child Protection Unit is understaffed and that children are not sufficiently aware of this mechanism.

16. **In the light of its general comment No. 2 (2002) on the role of independent human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure adequate funding of the Office of the Protection of the Citizen, strengthen the Child Protection Unit, in particular increase its staff, and ensure that children are sufficiently aware about the ability of the Unit to receive complaints. It also recommends that the State party continue to make efforts to ensure that the Office is in full conformity with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles).**

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training

17. **The Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.202, para. 20) and recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen its efforts to disseminate the principles and provisions of the Convention as a measure to sensitize society to children's rights through social mobilization;**

(b) **Undertake systematic education and training programmes on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working for and with children, in particular parliamentarians, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, municipal and local workers, personnel working in institutions and places of detention for children, teachers, health personnel, including psychologists, and social workers;**

(c) **Seek technical assistance from, among others, OHCHR and UNICEF.**

Cooperation with civil society

18. The Committee, while noting certain initiatives taken by the State party, including through the efforts made by the Working Group on Child Protection, remains concerned that the State party has not developed a well-structured, systematic cooperation with civil society. The Committee is furthermore deeply concerned about cases of violent attacks, including rape, and death threats carried out against human rights defenders, and in particular human rights defenders working on girls' rights as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights, and failure to investigate these crimes by the authorities.

19. **The Committee urges the State party to ensure that all cases of violent attacks and death threats carried out against human rights defenders are promptly and independently investigated and that those responsible for such abuses are held accountable and subject to commensurate sanctions. The Committee further recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts and establish a well-structured, systematic cooperation with civil society to set clear minimum standards for service providing activities and ensure that the minimum standards are given the necessary follow-up.**

B. Definition of the child (art. 1)

20. The Committee notes with concern that according to article 133 of the Civil Code girls may be married as of age 15 and boys as of age 18. Furthermore, the Committee notes with concern that:

(a) The legal status of a child of 15 years of age may be waived by parental decision, leading to his or her treatment as an adult under the law;

(b) A child engaging in marriage is automatically granted the status of majority, which is irrevocable, including in the event of marriage dissolution, which may place a child in a vulnerable situation, particularly girls who may be married at the age of 15.

21. **The Committee recommends that the State party abolish article 133 of the Civil Code and explicitly establish a minimum age of marriage of 18 for both girls and boys. It furthermore recommends that the State party abolish the discretionary power of the family to decide that a child has reached majority before attaining the age of 18 and ensure that all children can benefit from the full protection under the Convention under all circumstances.**

C. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

22. While welcoming the adoption in 2014 of the Law on paternity, maternity and filiation, which guarantees equal treatment of children born out of wedlock, the Committee notes with concern that the law is not retroactive thereby excluding children born outside wedlock before 2014 and that insufficient measures have been taken to implement the law, in particular regarding DNA testing. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) Persistent discrimination against girls, subjected to gender stereotypes and violence from the earliest stages of their lives;

(b) Ongoing de facto discrimination against children with disabilities, children in street situations, children engaged in child labour and children born out of wedlock or abandoned by their father, and discrimination, threats and attacks against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children.

23. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to:

(a) Ensure effective implementation of the Law on paternity, maternity and filiation, including by ensuring free access to DNA tests within a reasonable time frame, as well as by raising awareness of the law, particularly among persons living in remote areas;

(b) Ensure the retroactivity of the Law on paternity, maternity and filiation in order to guarantee that it applies to children born before 2014;

(c) Eliminate societal discrimination against girls through public educational programmes, including campaigns, organized in cooperation with civil society organizations, opinion leaders, families and the media to combat the stereotyping of gender roles and build the competence of teachers and other personnel at all levels of the education system on gender equality;

(d) Undertake awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, with a view to eliminating discrimination against and social exclusion of children with disabilities, children in street situations, children engaged in child labour, children born out of wedlock or abandoned by their father and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children, protect them against all forms of attack and foster an inclusive and tolerant environment in society, particularly in schools and other spaces for children.

Best interests of the child

24. In the light of its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.202, para. 29) and recommends that the State party ensure that the principle of the best interests of the child is reflected in all relevant legislation, policies, programmes and otherwise in the implementation of the Convention. The Committee particularly recommends that the State party abolish the rule of "*correction paternelle*", which allows parents to place a child in prison.

Respect for the views of the child

25. In the light of its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.202, para. 31) and encourages the State party to ensure that children's views are given due consideration, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention, in the family, at schools, in the courts and in all relevant administrative and other processes concerning them through, inter alia, the adoption of appropriate legislation, the training of professionals and the establishment of specific activities at schools.

D. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8 and 13-17)

Birth registration and nationality

26. The Committee, while noting the efforts taken by the State party to ensure access to birth registration, remains concerned that the number of children who are not registered and/or who do not possess a birth certificate remains high. It is furthermore concerned that:

(a) Institutions involved in civil registration are insufficiently functional with inadequately qualified employees and are underresourced, inter alia resulting in civil registration officers frequently charging fees for birth certificates;

(b) There are several cases of children having a birth certificate but not being registered, or vice versa;

(c) Access to civil registration services in rural and remote areas is limited;

(d) Identification cards are not issued to children, which puts them at risk of detention when crossing borders;

(e) The State party has not yet adopted the draft nationality law recognizing the status of stateless persons and containing measures to prevent statelessness and the draft Child Protection Code lacks provisions to prevent statelessness;

(f) Insufficient support is provided to undocumented children and families of Haitian descent expelled from the Dominican Republic who have been denaturalized and rendered stateless by the Dominican Republic.

27. **The Committee urges the State party to step up its efforts to ensure that all children are registered at birth including by establishing civil registration mechanisms in hospitals and camps for internally displaced persons (IDP), encouraging the use of mobile registration units, particularly in rural and remote areas, and by organizing awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns. The Committee further recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that all Civil Status Offices issue birth certificates free of charge;**

(b) **Ensure that registration and issuance of a birth certificate are combined;**

(c) **Allocate the necessary human, technical and financial resources to Civil Status Offices, including training of employees;**

(d) **Increase the number of and access to Civil Status Offices in all parts of the country, in particular in rural and remote areas;**

(e) **Revise its policies with a view to allowing children to obtain identification cards;**

(f) **Adopt the draft nationality law and adopt corresponding civil registration legislation, and furthermore ensure conformity of the draft Child Protection Code with the nationality law and the Conventions concerning statelessness;**

(g) **Immediately provide children of Haitian descent who have been expelled from the Dominican Republic and their families with identity documentation;**

(h) **Accede to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.**

E. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

Torture and other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment

28. The Committee is seriously concerned about:

(a) Reported cases of torture of children in detention;

(b) Continuing and severe violence against children, including domestic violence, particularly against those living in poverty and those engaged in domestic work, and the insufficient intervention by the authorities in these cases;

(c) Absence of support by the State party to children of Haitian descent who have reportedly become victims of torture by authorities of the Dominican Republic.

29. **The Committee draws attention to Sustainable Development Goal 16, target 16.1 on the significant reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere, and urges the State party to take prompt measures to prohibit and criminalize all forms of violence against children. It further recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of violence and torture and prosecute those responsible for such acts and ensure they are appropriately punished, in accordance with the seriousness of the crime;**

(b) **Establish a child-friendly mechanism enabling children in detention to correspond on a confidential basis with outside judicial and complaints bodies and install closed complaints boxes in prisons;**

(c) **Sensitize and train law enforcement personnel, social welfare officials, prosecutors and judges on the reporting, investigation, prosecution and sanctioning of cases of domestic and other forms of violence against children and guarantee child-friendly reporting channels for such cases;**

(d) **Continue its efforts to adopt coordination protocols between the authorities responsible for the protection of children at the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, as well as protocols for the voluntary return of migrant children, with guarantees of due process.**

Gender-based violence

30. The Committee is gravely concerned about the high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual and domestic violence, against women and girls, particularly those living in IDP camps, as well as the widespread impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators. It further notes with grave concern that the incidence of gender-based violence and sexual assault is supported by gender-biased attitudes that blame the female victim. It is also deeply concerned about:

(a) The frequent refusal by police officers, prosecutors and judges to investigate cases of gender-based violence, including as a result of corruption;

(b) The fact that victims of gender-based violence need to present a medical certificate in cases of rape in order to initiate criminal proceedings and are required to pay a fee to have their case prosecuted;

(c) Pervasive violence against pregnant women and girls;

(d) The lack of comprehensive statistical data on gender-based violence against women and girls.

31. **The Committee raises attention to Sustainable Development Goal 5, target 5.2 on the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation, and urges the State party to ensure that allegations of crimes related to gender-based violence are independently and thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators are brought to justice. The State party should provide regular substantive training for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, the police and other relevant professional groups on standardized, gender- and child-sensitive procedures for dealing with victims and on how gender stereotyping by the judiciary negatively affects strict law enforcement. It also urges the State party to:**

(a) **Adopt specific legislation on gender-based violence so as to strengthen the legal framework for the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence and develop and implement clear guidelines and disciplinary sanctions to**

combat impunity and hold law enforcement officials accountable for corruption and to encourage child victims of gender-based violence and their parents to report cases to the police;

(b) **Revise its legislation to ensure that a victim's testimony is sufficient to initiate criminal investigations into an act of rape or other forms of violence, and ensure that the victim is not charged any fees in relation to the prosecution of gender-based violence;**

(c) **Strengthen victim protection, assistance and rehabilitation, placing a particular focus on the protection of pregnant women and girls, through the setting up of a comprehensive care system for child victims of gender-based violence;**

(d) **Collect disaggregated data on gender-based violence against women and girls as well as on the number of complaints, prosecutions and convictions and include such data in its next report;**

(e) **Conduct large-scale awareness-raising and education programmes in collaboration with civil society organizations, targeted at boys, girls, men and women, in order to prevent gender-based violence and to combat the stigmatization of victims.**

Corporal punishment

32. The Committee, while welcoming the adoption in 2014 of the national action plan to prevent and respond to violence against children, is concerned that corporal punishment is still extensively practised in all settings, including the usage of different forms of whips against children, and widely accepted as a form of discipline. The Committee is also concerned that the law prohibiting corporal punishment lacks clarity in terms of whether all forms of corporal punishment are prohibited and that the existing prohibitions of corporal punishment are insufficiently implemented, leading to frequent impunity for perpetrators.

33. **In the light of its general comments No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment and No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, as well as the recommendations contained in the 2006 United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299), the Committee recommends that the State party prioritize the elimination of all forms of violence against children. The Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings and vigorously enforce this prohibition and monitor the ban of corporal punishment in all settings on a frequent basis;**

(b) **Raise awareness about the prohibition of violence among teachers, including by developing a code of conduct for teachers and by training teachers on positive and non-violent forms of discipline;**

(c) **Develop a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children;**

(d) **Promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline and strengthen awareness-raising and education programmes, including campaigns, on the prohibition of corporal punishment, including with the involvement of children.**

Sexual exploitation and abuse

34. The Committee welcomes the adoption in 2005 of the law on sexual aggression. It is seriously concerned, however, about the high number of cases of sexual exploitation and

abuse of children, which has further increased following the 2010 earthquake with a significant number of cases affecting children in IDP camps. It also notes with concern that perpetrators frequently enjoy impunity or receive light sentences. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) A general reluctance to report cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, the lack of protection for victims against stigmatization, exclusion and retaliation from perpetrators, as well as the insufficient support for, discrimination against and/or abuse of victims by the authorities;

(b) Parents often refusing to bring these cases to justice and accepting compensation by the perpetrator instead or putting pressure on the victim to go and live with the perpetrator;

(c) The high number of girls prostituting themselves in exchange for food, medical supplies or baby care items, so-called "transactional sex", as well as cases of sexual exploitation of women and children by United Nations peacekeepers in these scenarios;

(d) The lack of criminalization of marital rape;

(e) The vulnerability of children of single mothers to sexual abuse, including rape, as they are left with strangers during working hours, particularly in IDP camps.

35. **The Committee urges the State party to strictly enforce domestic laws protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse, to prosecute and punish perpetrators with appropriate sanctions and to provide intensive training to police personnel, the judiciary and other relevant professionals working with and for children on the related laws, as well as to:**

(a) **Establish mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to ensure mandatory reporting of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children and conduct awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, to combat the stigmatization of victims, ensure accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective reporting channels for such violations and protect victims and victims' families from any forms of retaliation;**

(b) **Prohibit any out-of-court settlements in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including sending the victim to engage in a marriage or *plasaj* or any other form of relationship with the perpetrator;**

(c) **Ensure adequate quality services, including free and timely access to emergency contraception and HIV prophylaxis, as well as resources to protect, compensate and rehabilitate child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse and provide specific support to girls and single mothers living in poverty with a view to preventing them from resorting to so-called "transactional sex";**

(d) **Explicitly criminalize marital rape and ensure that it entails sanctions equal to those for rape outside marriage;**

(e) **Ensure that working mothers can leave their children in adequate day-care centres and collaborate with civil society organizations among others in establishing these centres, including in IDP camps;**

(f) **Ensure the development of programmes and policies for the prevention, recovery and social reintegration of child victims, in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the World Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.**

Gang violence

36. The Committee is concerned that the climate of fear, insecurity, threat and violence linked to gangs, including kidnapping, impedes children from enjoying their childhood and adolescence.

37. **The Committee urges the State party to develop comprehensive strategies to effectively tackle this problem. These strategies should not be limited to penal measures but should also address the social factors and root causes of gang violence and crime related to drugs among adolescents, including policies for social inclusion of marginalized adolescents. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish programmes providing gang members with assistance to leave gangs and be reintegrated into society.**

Harmful practices

38. The Committee notes with concern that cases of forced or arranged marriage continue to occur in the State party, in particular in the event of rape or pregnancy.

39. **In the light of its general comment No. 18 (2014) on harmful practices, adopted jointly with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that the State party focus on undertaking comprehensive awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, to foster understanding of the negative consequences of child marriage and to combat negative societal attitudes towards underage unmarried pregnant girls and provide adolescent mothers and their children with all necessary support and protection against stigmatization and exclusion.**

F. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9-11, 18 (1 and 2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family environment

40. The Committee notes with concern that article 189 of the Civil Code on parental responsibility refers only to children of married parents. It also notes with concern that fathers frequently refrain from fulfilling their parental responsibilities and mothers seldom report these cases. Furthermore, it is concerned that the decree of 8 October 1982, providing for the arrest of persons who do not abide by their obligation to pay an alimentary pension, does not apply to unmarried couples.

41. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that mothers and fathers share equally the legal responsibility for their children and that it:**

(a) **Revise article 189 of the Civil Code and the decree of 8 October 1982 with a view to ensuring that they apply to children of both married and non-married parents;**

(b) **Raise awareness among mothers and fathers, particularly those living in rural and remote areas, about their right to report a lack of payment of maintenance and set up a national fund that would meet the maintenance obligations of defaulting parents and subsequently recover outstanding payments;**

(c) **Support public awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, aimed at men and boys on the need to exercise responsible parenthood;**

(d) **Ratify the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance, the Hague Protocol of 23 November 2007 on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations and the Hague Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.**

Children deprived of a family environment

42. While welcoming the establishment of a pilot programme by IBESR to place children into foster families, the Committee is concerned about the lack of any mechanism to monitor the treatment of children therein. It is furthermore concerned about the high rates of children deprived of their family environment, further exacerbated by the 2010 earthquake, and also notes with concern that:

(a) A high number of children are in alternative care institutions despite having one or both parents alive;

(b) The vast majority of alternative care institutions are privately run, often operate without authorization and are insufficiently monitored and that many of these institutions are profit motivated, using donor funds as a source of revenue, and actively look for children to host while refraining from promoting family reunification;

(c) No measures have been put into place to support children of incarcerated parents, including parents in pre-trial detention.

43. **The Committee recommends that the State party support and facilitate family-based care for children wherever possible, including by expanding the IBESR programme with a view to establishing a national system of foster care, ensure periodic review of the placement of children in foster families and monitor the quality of care therein, including by providing accessible channels for reporting, monitoring and remedying maltreatment of children. The Committee furthermore emphasizes that financial and material poverty — or conditions directly and uniquely attributable to such poverty — should never be the sole justification for removing a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care or for preventing a child's social reintegration. It further recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the best interests of the child, for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care and develop an appropriate legislative and administrative framework for reunification of children who are deprived of their family environment with their families, taking into account the best interests of the child and providing psychosocial and economic support to the families where necessary;**

(b) **Increase the proportion of publicly run alternative care institutions, allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources to these institutions, ensure that all privately run institutions are non-profit, officially registered and subject to regular control and monitoring and ensure the full protection of children residing therein;**

(c) **Provide all necessary support and care to children whose parents are serving a prison sentence or who are in pre-trial detention, regularly review their placement in alternative care, ensure that personal relations and direct contact with the parent in prison is maintained and give due consideration to the circumstances in which non-custodial sentences may be possible.**

Adoption

44. The Committee welcomes the ratification of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoptions and the efforts made by the State party to increase regulation of adoption, in particular the enactment of the law reforming adoption in 2013. It is concerned, however, that the law has not yet been fully implemented.

45. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt all necessary administrative procedures necessary for effective implementation of the law and ensure that sufficient human, technical and financial resources are made available for that purpose. It also recommends that steps be taken to monitor implementation of the law and to ensure that professionals responsible for adoption cases are fully equipped with the technical expertise needed to review and process cases in the light of the Hague Convention. It furthermore recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to encourage national adoptions.**

G. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1-3) and 33)

Children with disabilities

46. The Committee, while welcoming the adoption of the law on the integration of persons with disabilities in 2010, notes with concern that children with disabilities, the number of whom has increased following the 2010 earthquake, are subjected to marginalization and social exclusion. The Committee is also deeply concerned about:

(a) The lack of access to basic services for the vast majority of children with disabilities;

(b) The very limited access to education for children with disabilities, which is only provided by a few special schools with poor infrastructure, which are not fully accessible, as well as the insufficient measures taken to enable inclusive education;

(c) The lack of disaggregated data on children with disabilities.

47. **In the light of its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and undertake awareness-raising programmes targeting government officials, the public and families to combat negative societal attitudes and stigmatization of children with disabilities. The Committee further urges the State party to:**

(a) **Take immediate measures to ensure that children with disabilities have access to basic services, in particular health care, including early detection and intervention programmes, and that all children who have been subjected to amputations following the 2010 earthquake are provided with prostheses;**

(b) **Ensure that all children with disabilities have access to education, set up comprehensive measures to develop inclusive education and ensure that inclusive education is given priority over the placement of children in specialized institutions and classes;**

(c) **Collect disaggregated and comprehensive data on children with disabilities.**

Health and health services

48. While noting the efforts made by the State party to increase access to health services, the Committee is concerned that more than half of the population does not have access to basic health care and that the health sector is largely deficient and underresourced, with insufficient health personnel, lack of public hospitals and lack of quality health care. It furthermore notes with concern that:

(a) The rates of under-5 and neonatal mortality remain high, the latter being a major cause of infant mortality;

(b) There is a high rate of child mortality owing to waterborne diseases, such as typhoid, cholera and chronic diarrhoea;

(c) The rate of maternal mortality remains high, owing, inter alia, to the insufficient number of skilled birth assistants.

49. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and recommends that the State party take urgent measures to increase access to and the quality of health services throughout the country, placing a particular focus on rural and remote areas. To that effect, the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Increase the portion of its annual budget devoted to health to at least 15 per cent and clearly define financing strategies, paying particular attention to children under the age of 5;**

(b) **Address the lack of health staff by training, recruiting and retraining qualified health workers and provide all parts of the country with accessible and high-quality health-care facilities;**

(c) **Undertake all necessary measures to reduce under-5 and neonatal mortality rates, including by preventing infectious diseases and ensuring care for newborns during the neonatal period and adequate resources to provide emergency services and resuscitations in rural areas;**

(d) **Address the root causes of maternal mortality and decrease the maternal mortality rate, including by adopting a comprehensive safe motherhood strategy which prioritizes access to quality antenatal, postnatal and obstetric services, including emergency obstetric care, and by establishing monitoring and accountability mechanisms;**

(e) **Take all appropriate measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, specifically typhoid and cholera, thereby placing a particular focus on providing adequate sanitation and access to clean drinking water, particularly in rural areas;**

(f) **Implement and apply the OHCHR technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age (A/HRC/27/31) and the OHCHR technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce preventable maternal morbidity and mortality (A/HRC/21/22 and Corr.1 and 2);**

(g) **Seek financial and technical assistance from UNICEF and the World Health Organization, among others, in this regard.**

Adolescent health

50. The Committee is concerned about the lack of access to reproductive health services, contraceptives and prevention programmes for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, as well as the high rate of adolescent pregnancies, and also notes with concern the relatively high rate of new HIV infections among adolescents. It is also concerned that:

(a) Abortion is criminalized, except in the case of threat to the life of the mother, which results in many girls resorting to unsafe abortions putting their lives and health at risk;

(b) There is a high incidence of substance abuse among children and that different forms of substances, tobacco and alcohol are easily accessible for children without any control by the authorities, which is further exacerbated by the common practice of parents sending their children to buy tobacco and alcohol for them;

(c) Alcohol is sold in the vicinity of schools and children are frequently targeted by alcohol commercials.

51. **In the light of its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that sexual and reproductive health education is part of the mandatory school curriculum and targeted at adolescent girls and boys, with special attention on preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections;**

(b) **Develop adolescent-sensitive counselling and sexual health services and make them fully accessible to adolescents;**

(c) **Decriminalize abortions in all circumstances, review its legislation to guarantee children's access to safe abortion and post-abortion care services and ensure that the views of the girl are always heard and respected in abortion decisions;**

(d) **Raise awareness of and foster responsible sexual behaviour, with particular attention to boys and men;**

(e) **Strictly prohibit the sale of all forms of drugs, as well as of tobacco and alcohol, to children, consider raising taxes on substances and ban all advertising targeting children;**

(f) **Address the incidence of drug use by children and adolescents by, inter alia, providing children and adolescents, as well as parents, with accurate and objective information about the harmful consequences of substance abuse and with life-skills education on preventing substance abuse, including tobacco and alcohol;**

(g) **Make mental health services available;**

(h) **Develop specialized youth-friendly drug-dependence treatment and harm reduction services.**

Environmental health

52. The Committee is concerned about the negative effects of polluted air in urban areas in and around Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien, caused mainly by traffic congestion, trash burning, the use of charcoal for cooking and the use of diesel generators to produce electricity. In this regard, the Committee also notes with concern that women and children are particularly vulnerable to smoke-related illnesses due to women's traditional cooking responsibilities. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that DDT

(dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) pesticides, which have been linked to cancer, nerve damage and reproductive defects, may still occasionally be used in the State party.

53. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all necessary measures to reduce sources of air pollution, including by establishing a waste and recycling management system and ensuring access to a reliable electricity grid;**

(b) **Raise awareness among the population on how to reduce pollution in everyday life and protect themselves against the consequences of air pollution;**

(c) **Take all possible measures to reduce women's and children's exposure to indoor smoke, including by providing households with stoves with a more efficient combustion;**

(d) **Ban the use of harmful pesticides and take the necessary measures to ensure access to health care and services for children affected by pesticides.**

Impact of climate change on the rights of the child

54. The Committee is concerned about the significant increase in frequency and intensity of hurricanes and tropical storms, leading to flooding and erosion, as a result of climate change.

55. **The Committee draws attention to Sustainable Development Goal 13, target 13.5 on promoting mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management. In particular, it recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that the special vulnerabilities and needs of children, as well as their views, are taken into account in developing policies or programmes addressing the issues of climate change and disaster risk management;**

(b) **Discontinue deforestation to reduce the impact of the climate change consequences;**

(c) **Increase children's awareness and preparedness for climate change and natural disasters by incorporating these matters into the school curriculum and teachers' training programmes;**

(d) **Collect disaggregated data on types of risk faced by children with respect to the occurrence of natural disasters in order to formulate international, regional and national policies, frameworks and agreements accordingly.**

Standard of living

56. The Committee, while welcoming the efforts made with regard to increasing food security and decreasing rates of child malnutrition, notes with concern that food insecurity and malnutrition remain prevalent among children. It is furthermore highly concerned about:

(a) Widespread, extreme and increasing family poverty;

(b) The particularly poor housing situation, further exacerbated by the 2010 earthquake;

(c) The poor state of sanitation and insufficient access to safe drinking water.

57. **The Committee draws attention to Sustainable Development Goal 1, target 1.3 on implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all and recommends that the State party continue to strengthen efforts to ensure food**

security and combat and prevent malnourishment and that it expeditiously adopt the law on food fortification and ensure its effective implementation. It also recommends that the State party:

(a) **Develop, in consultation with families, children and children's rights organizations, a national poverty reduction strategy that establishes a coherent framework identifying priority actions against the marginalization of children, with specific and measurable objectives, clear indicators, deadlines and sufficient economic and financial support;**

(b) **Step up its efforts to ensure that all families are provided with adequate and affordable housing;**

(c) **Prioritize provision of drinking water and sanitation services in reconstruction activities, take all appropriate measures to ensure that the population has access to treated drinking water and raise awareness among the population on how to treat water in order to make it suitable for consumption.**

H. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28-31)

Education, including vocational training and guidance

58. The Committee welcomes the measures adopted in the context of the policy of mass education. It is, however, concerned that efforts remain largely insufficient and that only a limited number of the targets of the operational plan have been achieved. While welcoming efforts made, the Committee is also deeply concerned that a significant number of children still do not have access to education, in particular children in street situations, children with disabilities, children in conflict with the law, children in remote areas, children engaged in labour, internally displaced children and children who have been expelled from the Dominican Republic. It also notes with concern that:

(a) The later children enter schooling, the shorter the time they benefit from the Programme for Free Compulsory Universal Education, which aims at providing education for children between 6 and 12 years of age;

(b) Disparities remain in access to education between girls and boys and in particular between rural and urban areas;

(c) Pregnant girls, young mothers and rape victims are frequently forced or pressured to drop out of school;

(d) Educational infrastructure is poor, schools are poorly equipped, particularly in rural and remote areas, few teachers are adequately qualified and salaries are not regularly paid, leading to frequent cancellation of classes;

(e) The education sector is dominated by private schools, which are often not officially authorized or monitored by the authorities and which charge high fees, exacerbating existing structural discrimination in access to education, particularly affecting children in poverty;

(f) "Ghost schools" have mismanaged funds received in the context of the Programme for Free Compulsory Universal Education;

(g) The National Office for Partnership in Education, which is supposed to improve the public-private partnership, is not operative.

59. **The Committee reminds the State party of its primary responsibility for guaranteeing and regulating education and urges the State party to provide for free access to primary education and to take all necessary measures to guarantee access to**

education for children in vulnerable situations. It also recommends that the State party:

(a) **Prevent and eliminate gender and urban-rural disparities in school;**

(b) **Explicitly prohibit expulsion of pregnant teenagers, adolescent mothers and rape victims from school, eliminate any form of discrimination they may face in their access to education and ensure that they are fully supported and assisted in continuing their education;**

(c) **Increase the budget allocated to education, rehabilitate the infrastructure of the educational system, including by building additional schools and ensuring that schools are adequately equipped;**

(d) **Ensure that teachers are adequately qualified, expand and improve both pre-service and in-service teacher training and provide adequate salaries for teachers paid in a timely manner;**

(e) **Establish a comprehensive regulatory framework for and regularly monitor private education providers, so as to ensure that they comply with quality standards, regularly report on their financial operations to relevant authorities, including on school fees and salaries, and do not engage in for-profit education;**

(f) **Ensure that public-private partnerships do not impede access to quality education for all children and guarantee that they do not serve private interests or entail any form of commercialization of education.**

I. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b-d) and 38-40)

Children in migration

60. The Committee is seriously concerned about the extremely difficult living conditions, including significant health problems, in particular diarrhoea, fever and severe spread of cholera, undernutrition, lack of adequate drinking water and sanitation and the particularly poor housing, in makeshift camps of Haitians, among stateless families of Haitian descent and Dominican-born children of undocumented Haitian migrants, as well as unaccompanied children who have been expelled from the Dominican Republic.

61. **The Committee urges the State party to take prompt measures to provide children and their families who have been expelled from the Dominican Republic with access to adequate nutrition, water, sanitation, housing and health care. It should furthermore ensure assistance to and protection of unaccompanied children, drawing upon the principles set out in general comment no. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen cooperation with authorities from the Dominican Republic to ensure that relocation to Haiti takes place in a manner that respects the human rights of children and their families.**

Economic exploitation, including child labour and exploitation of child domestic workers

62. The Committee welcomes the establishment in 2013 of the National Tripartite Committee against child labour. It is concerned, however, about the high number of children engaged in child labour, including in agriculture, street vending and construction, and also notes with concern that article 340 of the Labour Code prohibiting the employment of a child under 15 years of age is rarely enforced. Furthermore, the Committee, while

noting the efforts taken by the State party to criminalize the exploitation of child domestic workers (so-called "*restavèks*") is concerned that the number of child domestic workers remains high. It also notes with concern that:

(a) Many child domestic workers are forced to work in slavery-like conditions, are subjected to physical, emotional and sexual abuse by their host family and are frequently malnourished and stunted;

(b) Children from poor families are particularly vulnerable to having to work as child domestic workers, as parents who cannot feed their children often see sending their child away as a domestic worker as their only choice;

(c) The death of a parent seems to be a further push factor for a child to be engaged as a child domestic worker and their number further increased after the 2010 earthquake;

(d) Many children in domestic service who escape this condition start living in the streets and/or are forced into prostitution, begging and street crime.

63. **The Committee recommends that the State party vigorously enforce the law prohibiting the employment of children under 15 years of age and criminalize the practice of placing children in domestic service, undertake legal amendments to ensure that the law entails adequate punishments and provide training to law enforcement professionals on these laws. It furthermore recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Continue and strengthen efforts to eradicate child labour, particularly in its worst forms, by addressing the root causes of economic exploitation through poverty eradication and education;**

(b) **Step up efforts to adopt the list of hazardous types of work which is currently under preparation;**

(c) **Identify child domestic workers and children engaged in other types of labour, ensure their immediate release and ensure that they are offered services for their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration, including access to education, and encourage and facilitate family reunification if that would be in the child's best interest;**

(d) **Conduct awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, to change the public perception of using children as domestic workers in order to understand its illegal nature and that it constitutes a form of child slavery;**

(e) **Establish social support programmes for families living in poverty and single parent families so they do not feel compelled by economic circumstances to give their children away;**

(f) **Seek technical assistance from the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of the International Labour Organization (ILO);**

(g) **Consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 198 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers (2011).**

Internally displaced children

64. The Committee welcomes the considerable efforts of the State party to find lasting solutions for children displaced by the 2010 earthquake, as well as the significant drop in the number of IDPs. It is, however, deeply concerned about:

(a) The still high number of displaced children living in IDP camps or informal settlements without adequate access to food, safe drinking water, sanitation, health care and education;

(b) Forced evictions of displaced children and their families living in IDP camps or informal settlements, including through the use of threats, intimidation and violence, as well as the lack of compensation or alternative housing for these children;

(c) The high levels of violence, including sexual violence, against children, particularly girls, in IDP camps, as well as the lack of access to shelter for victims.

65. **The Committee reminds the State party of the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons (A/HRC/29/34/Add.2) and urges the State party to review its policies regarding the eligibility criteria for being considered an IDP to ensure that all children and their families that have been displaced as a consequence of the 2010 earthquake are provided with durable solutions. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Step up its efforts to provide adequate housing for internally displaced children and their families living in IDP camps or informal settlements and ensure that they have access to sufficient food, clean drinking water, sanitation, health care and education;**

(b) **Adopt human rights-sensitive management of housing and land, taking into account relevant international standards, including the basic principles and guidelines on development-based evictions and displacement (see A/HRC/4/18, annex I) and the "Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security", adopted by the Committee on World Food Security of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2012;**

(c) **Take immediate measures to prevent all forms of violence against displaced children, including by ensuring that women and girls have access to separate lockable latrines and safe houses, as well as by increasing police controls and providing functioning illumination in IDP camps and informal settlements;**

(d) **Carry out a country-wide profiling and needs-based assessment of IDPs with a special emphasis on the situation of children and their location.**

Children in street situations

66. The Committee is concerned about the increasing number of children in street situations, further exacerbated by the 2010 earthquakes, who are vulnerable to forced begging, sexual exploitation, including prostitution, sale and trafficking, and use by gangs.

67. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop a comprehensive strategy to protect children in street situations and promote and facilitate reunification of children in street situations with their parents and other relatives or alternative carers when that would be in their best interests. It also recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Provide children in street situations with adequate nutrition and shelter, as well as with health care, educational opportunities and adequate protection and assistance;**

(b) **Identify the underlying causes of children living in street situations, such as poverty, family violence, internal displacement, separation from family and lack of access to education, with the aim of preventing and reducing this phenomenon. In this regard, the Committee calls upon the State party to place a particular focus on the specific vulnerability of girls in street situations to sexual abuse, exploitation and early pregnancy;**

(c) **Take all necessary measures to prevent children in street situations from getting involved with and being used by gangs.**

Sale, trafficking and abduction

68. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the law on the sale and trafficking of persons in 2014, as well as the development of an anti-trafficking national plan of action. It notes with concern, however, that the law is insufficiently implemented and that the State party is a source, transit and destination country for child trafficking for the purpose of forced labour and sexual exploitation, and is concerned about:

(a) The penal code not specifying a punishment for child kidnapping;

(b) Reported cases of child victims of trafficking being detained by law enforcement officials;

(c) Many families having been separated without any record following the earthquake, leading to the trafficking of several children, and about children in IDP camps, children in unauthorized alternative care institutions, children in poverty, children in street situations and children engaged in child labour remaining particularly vulnerable to being trafficked;

(d) Adequate victim identification and referral procedures to provide assistance to child victims of trafficking being very limited.

69. **The Committee recommends that the State party take adequate measures to vigorously implement the law and hold perpetrators of the sale of children, child trafficking and abduction accountable for their offences, and adopt a comprehensive policy with targeted measures to address the root causes of child trafficking, focusing on children in the most vulnerable and marginalized situations. It also recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Amend the penal code and ensure that child kidnapping is adequately punished with a sanction commensurate to this crime;**

(b) **Vigorously implement victim protection policies introduced with the 2014 law and ensure that child victims of trafficking are always treated as victims and not as criminals;**

(c) **Take all necessary measures to reunify children with their families when this is in the children's best interests;**

(d) **Proactively identify trafficking victims among children in vulnerable situations;**

(e) **Define referral procedures for victims of trafficking and strengthen its efforts to ensure physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims of exploitation and trafficking.**

Administration of juvenile justice

70. The Committee, while welcoming the increase in the number of juvenile judges, notes with concern that juvenile courts exist only in Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien, that the juvenile court in Cap-Haïtien has not been formalized in law and that the number of juvenile judges is still insufficient. It is furthermore concerned that:

(a) The relevant age for determining whether juvenile or adult law is applied, is the age at which the child is judged and not when the crime was committed;

(b) While the State party indicates that 13 is the age of criminal responsibility in practice, this is not explicitly stipulated in law and children between the ages of 16 and 18 are judged as adults;

(c) Children in detention have reportedly been subjected to torture, their living conditions in prison are very poor, they lack access to health care and they have particularly limited access to education;

(d) Children are subjected to lengthy pre-trial detention and alternative measures to detention are very limited;

(e) There is only one detention facility where children and adults are separated;

(f) Measures to provide psychological assistance to children in detention and for rehabilitation and reintegration into society of children who have been in conflict with law are lacking.

71. **In the light of its general comment No. 10 (2007) on children's rights in juvenile justice, the Committee urges the State party to bring its juvenile justice system fully into line with the Convention and other relevant standards and to:**

(a) **Undertake all necessary legal amendments and measures to ensure that under all circumstances the relevant age for the application of juvenile law is the age when the offence was committed;**

(b) **Explicitly specify the age of criminal responsibility of 13 years or more in law and ensure that under no circumstances are persons under 18 years of age judged as adults;**

(c) **Expeditiously establish sufficient specialized juvenile court facilities and procedures with adequate human, technical and financial resources and increase the number of juvenile judges;**

(d) **Eliminate and prosecute all forms of torture and ill-treatment against children, improve living conditions in prison and ensure that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services;**

(e) **Promote alternative measures to detention, such as diversion, probation, mediation, counselling or community service, wherever possible, and ensure that detention is used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time and that it is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to withdrawing it;**

(f) **In cases where detention is unavoidable, ensure that children are not detained together with adults;**

(g) **Ensure the access of children to psychological services in detention and to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes following their detention.**

72. **To that effect, the Committee recommends that the State party make use of the technical assistance tools developed by the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice and its members, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNICEF, OHCHR and non-governmental organizations, and seek technical assistance in the area of juvenile justice from members of the Panel.**

J. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

73. **The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.**

K. Ratification of international human rights instruments

74. **The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the core human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party, namely the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.**

L. Cooperation with regional bodies

75. **The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the Organization of American States (OAS) on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other OAS member States.**

V. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

76. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented. The Committee also recommends that the combined second and third periodic reports, the written replies to the list of issues of the State party and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.**

B. Next report

77. **The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined fourth to sixth periodic reports by 7 January 2021 and to include therein information on the follow-up to the present concluding observations. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted on 31 January 2014 (CRC/C/58/Rev.3) and should not exceed 21,200 words (see General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16). In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.**

78. **The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document, not exceeding 42,400 words, in accordance with the requirements for the common core document in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I) and General Assembly resolution 68/268 (para. 16).**